

has been everywhere accepted throughout our country. How true it has proved to be, that every day Russian resistance has held up the German advance has been a day contributed to the cause of freedom, and the growing power of the British commonwealth and the United States!

I shall not attempt to outline the Russian campaign or to predict its outcome. For over four months hostilities have continued on a long front stretching from the Arctic shore to the Crimea on the Black sea. There, notwithstanding the might of the German onslaught, a front still remains. The front line of defence runs through the rivers and plains of Russia. Fighting has been concentrated in three main sectors: in the north around Leningrad, which at the moment is in a virtual stage of siege; in the centre toward Moscow, in which area there has been continuous heavy fighting with enormous casualties in both men and materials; and in the south where strong German forces have already penetrated a long distance into the Ukraine. Here Germany has already captured many of the key centres beyond the Dnieper river where much of the Russian heavy industry is concentrated. After a stout defence of many weeks the Black sea port of Odessa has been evacuated. German hostilities have been extended into the Crimea. The most serious strategic threat to successful Russian resistance is in this southern sector. The way appears to be opening for further penetration southwesterly into the Caucasus; one of the few areas in which Russia and Britain have direct communications by land and sea.

Russia, the largest European nation, is fighting every inch of the way. Never in human history has battle, reckoned in machines and men together, been waged on such a scale. Never have casualties been heavier. Only rarely, I believe, has the spontaneous sympathy of people throughout the world been so aroused.

It is not surprising that in so flagrant a case of aggression promises of support for Russia should have been forthcoming without delay. Britain, hard pressed though she is, took immediate steps to furnish military and economic aid. The government of the United States pledged all practical economic assistance. As an outcome of the Atlantic conference between President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, the governments of Britain and the United States undertook to send a joint mission to Russia to plan and organize the largest possible measure of assistance. In their recent conferences, the mission speedily reached agreement with the Russian government under which assistance in growing volume is already being provided.

The Canadian government kept in close touch with the activities of the Beaverbrook-Harriman mission both before and during its visit to Moscow. In consequence the members of the mission were in a position to count upon tangible support from Canada in the fulfilment of the undertakings given to the soviet government. It is not possible for me at this time to give details of the character or the extent of Canadian aid to Russia or of the precise arrangements being made with the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States with whom Canada is cooperating in sending the aid. In a general way the programme of aid includes war supplies, food, medical supplies and transport equipment.

The Russian campaign was preceded, as hon. members will recall, by the sweep of the nazi forces through the Balkan states and by the invasion and conquest of Greece. In a general way, on either side of the Mediterranean, at Gibraltar, along the north African coast, through Egypt, and to the Suez, the relative positions of the opposing forces have remained, throughout the summer months and since, much what they were at the time of the conquest of Greece. There has been continuous fighting on and over the waters of the Mediterranean, but all this, and much else, has been largely overshadowed by the immensity of the conflict in Russia.

A plane, flying from Gibraltar throughout the length of the Mediterranean, and pursuing its flight in an easterly direction to northern India, would fly in practically a straight line across Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. These countries are all immediately to the south of either Turkey or Russia. Geography is in itself sufficient to disclose how important, for strategic reasons, their position is.

There are, however, economic as well as geographical considerations which make the political disposition of each of these countries a matter of first importance. In Iraq and Iran lie the vast fields which supply much of the oil required by Britain for military as well as industrial purposes. For these countries to become hostile, or to pass into the hand of the enemy, might well prove a major disaster. When it is realized that the Ukraine and the Caucasus, because of their economic resources, are the possessions which above all Germany hopes to wrest from Russia, it will be seen how important to Russia and Britain alike is the retention of these areas in friendly hands.

As was to have been expected, there were evidence of enemy intrigue and penetration throughout Syria, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, even before the Russian campaign commenced. Secret agents were at work in each of them, fostering discontent and making alliances cal-